



Eugene I. Lee Jr.
President, Specialty Restaurant Group

Gene Lee is President of Darden Restaurants' Specialty Restaurant Group (SRG) and a member of Darden's Executive Team. Created in 2007, the SRG focuses on building and operating restaurant companies that deliver a differentiated, upscale dining experience, and/or are not designed to become nationally advertised brands. The current SRG brands include The Capital Grille, Bahama Breeze and Seasons 52.



Gene joined Darden in October 2007 as part of the company's acquisition of RARE Hospitality International, where he served as President and Chief Operating Officer. Gene had been with RARE since January 1997, serving initially as Executive Vice President of Operations for its Bugaboo Creek Steakhouse concept. He became Executive Vice President of Operations for RARE's LongHorn Steakhouse division in October 1997 and was promoted to COO of RARE the following year. In 2001, he was named President of RARE and elected to its Board of Directors.

Gene's 20-plus years of restaurant operating experience includes two years as Senior Vice President of Operations for Uno Restaurant Corp. and several management positions with York Steak House Systems.

A native of Massachusetts, Gene earned an MBA from Suffolk University in Boston.

Darden is the world's largest full-service restaurant operating company with annual sales of \$7.5 billion. The company owns and operates 1,900 Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, The Capital Grille, Bahama Breeze and Seasons 52 restaurants in North America, employs approximately 180,000 people and serves more than 400 million meals annually. In 2011, Darden became the first full-service restaurant company ever to be named to the FORTUNE "100 Best Companies to Work For" list.